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ABSTRACT

During the school year 1974-75, a project to place exiting students in an occupational or postsecondary program was conducted by the Tuscaloosa County School System. The project was designed to assist graduating seniors of four high schools and those exiting prior to graduation. In meeting the project goal the following activities were carried out: an advisory board and separate advisory committees in each high school were established, a listing of local educational opportunities was compiled, the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the General Aptitude Test Battery were administered, and interviews were conducted with each student. The goal of placing all students was not attained; only an estimated 50% were placed. Objectives attained to varying degrees were: helping students reconcile post high school ambitions with existing educational programs, ascertaining prospective employers' suggestions for curriculum modification, and providing teachers with staff development activities to help them relate curricular offerings to occupations. Results of a student evaluation are appended, along with an evaluation report which discusses project accomplishments in terms of objectives and offers possible explanations and solutions to the problems encountered. (NJ)

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ED124787

FINAL REPORT

Project Number RCU-D-75-S013

Tuscaloosa County School System
Placement Services For Exiting Students

Exemplary Project in Vocational Education
Conducted Under
Part D of Public Law 90-576
(Part-D)

Dr. Charles Sprayberry, Superintendent
Tuscaloosa County Board of Education
P.O. Box 2568
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

August 7, 1975

The project reported herein was conducted pursuant to a grant with the Alabama State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education and Community Colleges. Contractors undertaking such projects under State Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgement in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official State Department of Education position or policy.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract of Final Report	1
Purpose of Project	1
Objectives	1
Procedures	2
Findings and Accomplishments	3
Other	4
Introduction	5
Objectives	6
Project Personnel	19
Procedures	19
Accomplishments	20
Problems Encountered	20
The Future	20
Appendix A	22

VT 102 947

Abstract of Final Report

Title of Project: A Program Designed to Provide Occupational and Educational Placement Services for all Exiting Students of the Tuscaloosa County School System

Name of Organization: The Tuscaloosa County School System

Address of Organization: P. O. Box 2568
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

Project Director: Jesse C. Bailey

Amount of Federal/State Funds: $15,500

Duration of Project: September 1, 1974 - June 30, 1975

Purpose of Project

The purpose of the project was to place each exiting student in a job or an educational program that would meet his or her expressed needs.

Objectives

1. To establish an advisory board to be composed of membership representative of the community.
2. To establish an advisory committee in each of the four secondary schools.
3. To compile a listing of specific jobs that exist among the major and the minor employers.
4. To compile a listing of the specific educational opportunities available in the community.
5. To administer the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, and the Generao Aptitude Test Battery to each exiting student.

6. To conduct at least one interview with each exiting student in order to ascertain the personal vocational goals of each student.

7. To help each exiting student reconcile his or her post-high school ambitions with the exiting vocational or post-high school educational program.

8. To place all exiting students in an occupation or a post-high school educational program.

9. Ascertain a listing of the modifications that the prospective employers think should be made in the students' curriculums which will prepare them more adequately to enter the world of work.

10. To provide the teachers staff-development activities that will be designed to help them relate curricular offerings to occupations.

Procedures

A coordinator was employed under the auspices of this project to:

1. Establish an advisory board within the community.

2. Establish an advisory committee in each secondary school.

3. Compile a listing of specific jobs available within the community.

4. Compile a listing of educational opportunities available in the community.

5. Administer the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, and the General Aptitude Test Battery to each exiting student.

6. Conduct at least one interview with each exiting student directly related to the students' vocational aspirations.

7. Help each student reconcile his or her post-high school ambitions with the existing vocational or post-high school educational programs.

8. Place all exiting students in an occupation or a post-high school educational program.

9. Ascertain a listing of the modifications that prospective employers believed that should be made in the students' curucular offerings.

10. Provide teachers staff development activities that would help them relate curricular offerings to occupations.

Findings or Accomplishments

A statement of the findings or accomplishments follows each delineated objective statement.

1. To establish an advisory board to be composed of membership representative of the community.

   This advisory board was established. It functioned, however, to a very minimal advantage to the project which was due, perhaps, to the state of the economy.

2. To establish an advisory committee in each of the four secondary schools.

   A committee was established in each of the four secondary schools. Experience with this concept indicated that committees of this nature can be invaluable in the placement of students in occupations.

3. To compile a listing of specific jobs that exist among the major and the minor employers.

   This objective was not accomplished due to (1) the poor state of the economy or lack of jobs being available; and (2) the coordinator did not exert sufficient efforts. Experiences during the year indicated that it was a very good idea, however.

4. To compile a listing of the specific educational opportunities available in the community.

   This objective was attained.

5. To administer the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, and the General Aptitude Test Battery to each exiting student.

   This objective was attained. Its attainment resulted in the students (1) learning more about themselves, and (2) deciding more completely upon the occupational cluster in which they were interested on both immediate and long-ranged bases.

6. To conduct at least one interview with each exiting student in order to ascertain the personal vocational goals of each student.

   This objective was attained with the help of the guidance counselors and the vocational personnel in each school.

7. To help each exiting student reconcile his or her post-high school ambitions with the existing vocational or post-high school educational program.

   This objective was attained to varying degrees. Feedback of information on an informal basis revealed that it helped many students learn to think more realistically about an occupation.

8. To place all exiting students in an occupation or a post-high school educational program.

   This objective was not attained to the degree that each exiting student was placed in an occupation or a post-high school educational program. The estimation is that more than 50 percent of the students were placed.

9. Ascertain a listing of the modifications that the prospective employers think should be made in the students' curriculums which will prepare them more adequately to enter the world of work.

   This objective was not attained to maximal degrees.

10. To provide the teachers staff-development activities that will be designed to help them relate curricular offerings to occupations.

    This objective was attained to varying degrees in spite of this project. It was discovered that the teachers considered the process of relating curricular offerings to occupations a component of their job in the first place. It appears that the project activities reinforced the teachers' efforts in this area.

Other

A qualified person (not employed by this school system) was employed under the auspices of this project to function as an evaluator of the project.

On an intermittent basis, this evaluator determined the degree to which efforts were being made to implement the project in relation to the evaluative component of each objective. This evaluator provided the project director and the project coordinator an interpretation of his observations.

A copy of the evaluator's report is attached.

I. Introduction

The implementation of this project,"Placement Services for Exiting Students," during the school year, 1974-75, was an innovative approach on the part of the Tuscaloosa County School System (TCSS) in attempting to place exiting students in an occupation or in a post-secondary school occupational training program.

The concept upon which this project was based was to assist all exiting students in taking the "next step" from that of being enrolled in a public school setting into the novel status of employment or into a post-secondary school occupational training program.

The project was designed to assist all of the graduating seniors enrolled in the four high schools of this school system, approximately 800 students, and those who exited prior to graduation.

II. Objectives

1. During the month of September, 1974, the coordinator will establish an advisory board to be composed of a membership that will represent all of the resources within the community relative to occupational and educational placement. The membership will include representation from occupational and educational resources such as:

   a. The Alabama State Employment Service
   b. The Chamber of Commerce
   c. The Tuscaloosa Personnel Association (This association is composed of membership of industry that includes the B.F. Goodrich Tire Plant, Gulf States Paper Corporation, Central Foundry Chemical Plant, Hunt Oil Company and several others.)
   d. The Kiwanis Club
   e. The Tuscaloosa State Vocational Technical College
   f. The Shelton State Technical College
   g. Junior Colleges (Representatives of those which offer extension courses in this area.)
   h. The University of Alabama
   i. The Tuscaloosa County School System

   This board will function to provide the coordinator with advice and current information concerning the areas of employment and post-high school educational opportunities as they exist in reality on a day-to-day basis within the community.

   The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the contents of a document in which the coordinator will indicate the date on which the board was established; the names of the people who served on it; and a narrative accounting that will describe and evaluate, subjectively, the advice received from the board during the year.

Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

The success of this program is contingent upon its acceptance and support of two power structures in this community. These two power structures, as they relate to this program are composed of top and middle management of those who manage the local labor market and the educational institutions, respectively.

Past experiences seem to have indicated that one's acceptance and support of a cause is directly in proportion to one's intellectual or emotional commitment to that cause. Accepting possible degrees of petitio principii in proposition, it seems to follow that in order for the coordinator to gain the necessary degrees of commitment from the "top" and "middle" management of those two power structures he must:

1. Communicate to them the goals and the objectives of the program. Emphasize how the attainment of the goals will benefit them and the community economically.

2. Convince them that this program is not a design to elicit financial support from them at any time during the year. Communicate to them that the program idea originated in the Division of Vocational Education and Community Colleges, State Department of Education and is financed under the auspices of this Division.

3. Delineate for them how they can reify through actions their acceptance and support of the program.

4. Communicate to them the nature of the advise that will be needed from them in order for this program to be successful.

5. Select a sampling that will be representative of both levels of management of those who manage the post-high school educational institutions and those who manage the labor market. Since a much greater percentage of exiting students, who exit this school system, do not enter a post-high school educational program than those who do, managers who control the labor market must be included in the sampling in proportion to the degree that they control the means that can meet the needs of a majority of the exiting students in the present as well as in the future. For example, there are 130 local major employeers (those who employ 30 or more people), and 250 local minor employeers (those who employ 5 or more people). In contrast, there are six post-high school educational institutions including technical colleges and junior colleges which serve the students of which less than a majority of the exiting students have enrolled in the past.

6. Establish a plan of action so the board can function as an advisory board in realtiy, and not just in name.

Thus these activities are based upon the concept and meaning of "reciprocity" held by Warren Bennis. (Etzioni, Amitai, ed., Readings On Modern Organizations, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1969.)

2. During the month of September, 1974, the placement coordinator will establish in each of the four high schools an advisory committee that will function to:

   a. Assist the placement coordinator in establishing realistic, meaningful goals and objectives on which to base his activities while he is working with the students and the school personnel.

   b. Validate and support the novel and unique schedule of activities in which the placement coordinator will involve the school faculty, exiting students, and selected representatives of the local community in his efforts to provide occupational and educational placement services for all of the students.

   The membership of this committee will include:

   a. Principal of the school
   b. Guidance Counselor
   c. Vocational Counselor
   d. Classroom teachers of exiting students
   e. Teachers of the Vocational subjects
   f. Coordinators of Vocational activities - Trade and Industrial Education and Distributive Education

   The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the contents of a document in which the coordinator will indicate the date on which the committee was established; the names of thepersonnel who served on it; and a narrative accounting that will describe and evaluate, subjectively, the assistance the counselor received from each of the committees during the school year.

   Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

   The goals and the objectives of this program are based upon the needs identified and expressed by a group of school personnel who represent the entire school system in expressing the needs of the exiting students in the areas of occupational and educational placement.

   Generalizations from the enormous body of research published by authorities relative to the origin and functions of organizations (Chris Argyris, Edgar Schein, James March, Herbert Simon, and Amitas Etzioni) and those who have been concerned with the formation of groups and their relative degrees of stability and change (Kurt Lewin, George Homans, and William Savage) strongly indicate that the chances that this program will be successful if the personnel in each of the schools in which this program is to be implemented are asked both indiviaually and as a group to accept support and help implement this program.

This body of research also reveals that in order for these personnel to accept, support and cooperate in the implementation of this program, they must be allowed to participate in it.

Consequently, in an effort to obtain the support of the personnel needed for the ultimate success of this program, the coordinator will establish in each of the four schools an advisory committee through which to communicate to the personnel:

a. The initiator of the idea. (The Division of Vocational Education and Community Colleges of the State Department of Education.)

b. The basis on which the decision was made to submit the proposal.

c. The method used to conduct the needs assessment.

d. The funding period of the project.

e. The source of funding.

f. The goals and objectives of the project, including the activities necessary to the attainment of the goals.

g. The plan to be followed in implementing the programs in each school

h. The delineation of specific ways each member of the personnel can assist in the implementation of the project.

i. The anticipated results.

j. The use that will be made of the results.

k. The implications for an expansion of the program in the future based upon the results anticipated upon the completion of this project.

3. During the first five months of the school year, 1974-1975, the coordinator will compile a listing of specific jobs, and a corresponding job description of each, that exist among the 130 local major employers (those who employ 30 or more persons) and the 250 local, minor employers (those who employ 5 or more persons).

   The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon an objective rating that a group, representative of employers (or their designate) will be asked to express during the month of February, 1975. (The evaluation of this objective to be conducted during this month will allow the coordinator sufficient time during which to modify his lsiting so that it will be of maximal value and use in counseling with and in placing the students in jobs.)

   Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

   To facilitate the completion of this listing of job opportunities and the corresponding job descriptions the coordinator will go into the community* and obtain relevant data and information from the employers, personnel officers and sources that will include:

   a. The personnel officers of personnel departments
   b. The Alabama Employment Service
   c. The Chamber of Commerce
   d. Personnel association
   e. Civic organizations
   f. Parents
   g. Laymen

* The fact that the coordinator will be working in the community instead of sitting in an office or a classroom collecting this data and information, vicariously, will no doubt prove to be the most efficacious feature of this program.

4. During the first five months of the school year, 1974-75, the coordinator will compile a listing of specific educational opportunities and resources that are available in the community.

   The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon whether or not the coordinator did, in fact, compile such a listing by the month of February, 1975. The attainment of this objective, during this time-frame, is necessary in order for the coordinator and the coordinator and the counselors to have it available to use during the times in which they will be involved in counseling the students.

   Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

   To facilitate the compilation of the listing of the educational opportunities, the coordinator will go into the community to obtain his information. He will obtain information and data from institutions and agencies such as:

   a. The technical colleges located in the community
   b. The junior colleges that offer extension courses within the community
   c. The University of Alabama
   d. The Continuing Education Center
   e. The Adult Basic Education Center
   f. The business colleges

5. During the first six months of the school year, 1974-75, the coordinator will coordinate the administration of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, and the General Aptitude Test Battery, to each of the exiting students.

   The attainment of this objective will be based upon whether or not the results of these two instruments are, in fact, in the office of the coordinator by the end of the month of February, 1975.

   Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

   The coordinator will make the logistical arrangements prerequisite to the administration of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the General Aptitude Test Battery. He will distribute the inventories, the test batteries and answer sheets to the counselors who will actually administer the instruments to the students. When the instruments have been administered, he will coordinate the scoring services which will include the conversion of the results into a form that can be utilized in matching students with occupations and in giving them advice concerning post-high school educational experiences

6. Utilizing the relevant data that has accumulated in each student's permanent records along with additional pertinent data and information that will be obtained during the first six months of the school year, the coordinator will, with the assistance of the guidance counselors, and the vocational counselors conduct at least one interview on a one-to-one basis with each exiting student for the explicit purpose of providing the student with a unique and an appropriate opportunity to:

   a. Gain a realistically functional comprehension of his abilities.

   b. Compare his internalized conceptions of how he perceives himself to be in relation to his aptitudes, attitudes, interests, and values to those he expressed, objectively, in responding to standardized instruments such as the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (please refer to Appendix 1), the General Aptitude Test Battery, the Differential Aptitude Test, and similar measures.

   c. Evolve a global, comprehension of himself as a person based upon both subjective and objective assessments in relation to the following factors: physical and mental abilities, aptitudes, attitudes, interests, and values.

   The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the results of an appropriate questionnaire that will be administered, during the month of May, 1975, to a representative sampling of exiting studnets in each of the four high schools. (This questionnaire will be developed by the evaluator, the coordinator, the guidance and the vocational counelors. The contents will be approved by the advisory committee of each school before it is administered to the students.)

   Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

   At this point in time, six months of the school year will have passed, and a sufficient amount of current data will exist on which to conduct an appropriate conference with each exiting student. The coordinator will, with the assistance of the guidance counselors, and the vocational counselors, conduct a conference with each exiting student on a one-to-one basis, the results of which will be to make maximal efforts to assist the student in learning enough about himself on which to make rational plans for his future. During this conference, the student will:

   a. Understands what the objective data reveals about him in relation to the following areas:
      (1) Mental abilities
      (2) Physical abilities
      (3) Aptitudes
      (4) Interests
      (5) Values

   b. Compares the concept he holds of himself to the five areas of objective data listed above.

   c. Evolves a global comprehension of himself, that he can verbalize, based upon the objective data and his conception of his subjective self.

7. At a predetermined time, during the seventh and the eighth month of the school year, the coordinator will, with the help of the guidance counselors, vocational counselors, vocational personnel, and the classroom teachers, have each exiting student delineate and state on paper, his occupational and his educational plans for at least ten years into the future.

The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the results of a survey that will be conducted by the evaluator during the month of April, 1975, the results of which will indicate by name the students who have, and those who have not stated on paper, for the coordinator, their occupational and/or educational plans for the ensuing ten years. (Any exiting student who did not delineate his plans will be assisted in doing so since this is a necessary, prerequisite activity to subsequent counseling the student will receive relative to making specific plans for the future.

Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

Between the end of the sixth and the eighth month of school, the coordinator will be responsible for collecting each exiting student's stated occupational and educational plans forthe ensuing ten years.

The guidance counselors and the classroom teachers will provide the students appropriate information and data, and a sufficient amount of time during which to state, on paper, their future plans.

Having the student make this commitment relative to his future plans will cause him to:

a. Synthesize all of his past experiences and his aspirations, into goals or plans.

b. Formulate, into communicable terms, that willbe meaningful to himself and to others, his future plans.*

c. Cause the student to experience the results of initiatory action directly relative to his attaining his future goals.

d. Involve the student in experiences that will cause him to interact with others that will, in most cases, be psychologically and and emotionally rewarding for him. (Skinner, B.F., Beyond Freedom and Dignity, Alfred A. Knoff, Inc., 1971.)

f. Motivate the student to subsequent activities relative to attaining his future goals. (Maslow, Abraham, H., Motivation and Personality, Harper and Row, New York, 1970.)

*While involved in the process of conducting the needs assessment on which this proposal is based, the counselors continued to emphasize the fact that a great majority of the exiting students exhibited very few indications of having thought about or making any plans concerning their future until about the last two weeks of school. At this time, they said that many of the students became almost frantic because, for the first time in their lives, they realized they didn't have any goals or plans to guide their activities upon their entrance into the world of reality. Thus, this activity seems to be very significant from cognitive, affective, and psychological points of view.

8. Utilizing the plans that the student has delineated, the data and information contained in his permanent records, and the listing of job placements and the educational opportunities, the coordinator, the guidance counselors, and the vocational counselors will conduct a conference with each exiting student during the last two months of school that will be designed to match, with a high degree of correspondence, each student with a small cluster of jobs (not more than five), and/or a plan for post-high school education.

This objective is based upon research presented by Lofquist, L.H., and Dawis Rene V., in their book, Adjustment to Work a Psychological View of Man's Problems in a Work-Oriented Society, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1969.

The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the results of an appropriate questionnaire that will be administered, during the month of May, 1975, to a representative sampling of exiting students in each of the four high schools. (This questionnaire will be developed by the evaluator, the coordinator, the guidance and the vocational counselors. The contents will be approved by the advisory committee of each school before it is administered to the students.)

Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

The coordinator will have coordinated the assemblage of pertinent data and information, compiled comprehensive listings of jobs and educational opportunities and will have collected from each student a statement of his future plans.

Consequently, during the last two months of school, the coordinator,** the guidance counselors, and the Vocational counselors, will conduct a conference (3) with each exiting student, the explicit purpose of which will be to:

1. Help the student synthesize all of the data and information concerning his abilities, aptitudes, attitudes, values, aspriations, and plans into comprehensive terms so that it can be used during the conference (s) to:

    a. Match, with a high degree of correspondence, each student with a small cluster of related jobs (not more than five).

        1. Evolve a plan that the student will follow in:

            a. Obtaining an application blank.
            b. Filling in the blank (maximum number of days).
            c. Person to whom the application is to be submitted.

2. Establish carefully delineated plans and specific guides that the student should follow concerning the interview*

    a. Transportation to the interview.
    b. Physical appearence.
    c. Verbal expressions and responses relative to plans.
    d. Mannerisms.
    e. Honesty.
    f. Job information to obtain
        1. Working conditions
        2. Salary
        3. Promotions
        4. Policies

b. Select at least two post-high school educational plans.

    1. Evlove a plan that the student will follow in

        a. Obtaining an application blank.
        b. Filling in the blank.
        c. Submission data.
        d. Person to whom the blank is to be submitted.

    2. Establish carefully delineated plans and specific guides that the student will follow concerning the interview with the admissions personnel:

        a. Transportation to the interview
        b. Physical appearences
        c. Verbal expressions and responses
        d. Communicativeness relative to future plans.
        e. Honesty
        f. Information to obtain
            1. Degree or certificate granted
            2. Costs
            3. Years of study required for completion
            4. Employment status of former graduates
            5. Predicted employment opportunities for future graduates
            6. Pertinent information concerning:
                a. Registeration
                b. School term
                c. Vacation
            7. Academic or performance level expected

During these last two months of school (and during the summer months for the coordinator) the counselors and the coordinator will conduct follow-up conferences with the students in order to:

1. Ascertain and accentuate the degree of success experienced by the student during his interview.

2. Assess the status of the student's progress in his efforts.

3. Help the student make modificstions in the areas where they are needed.

4. Assist student in going back through the interview process if needed.

5. Help the student delineate plans for actual entrance into the occupation or educational program.

* This will involve making the administrative and the logistical arrangements for the student to leave school during the school day in many cases.

Because of the current meanings and interpretations by the courts relative to torts and liabilities when made applicapable to school personnel, especially in relation to transportation, the coordinator will not provide transportation for students to interviews in his automobile.

However, he will utilize transportational facilities that are available under the auspicies of federally funded programs such as, Title I, and Upward Bound; the transportational facilities of the technical colleges; and parents who volunteer to provide services for students.

** The coordinator will conduct conferences both initial and follow-up during the three summer months. This will be a period of time when he will be most valuable in helping the student with placement in a job or a post-high school educational program.

9. During the month of June, 1975, the coordinator will continue to place all exiting students in occupations and/or post-high school educational programs who did not get placed by the ending of the school year.

The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the number of students the coordinator places in occupations and/or educational programs during this period of time. For purposes of evaluation, the coordinator will provide the evaluator a listing of the names of the students he places.

Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

In placing students in occupational programs during the summer months, he will continue the process used in the placement of students that was begun during the school year. He will continue to utilize the student's cumulative records, the placement listings (occupational, and educational) and the resources within the community, such as, the Alabama State Employment Service, the Chamber of Commerce, the Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Facility, the 130 local major market, the 750 local minor market employeers, and the post-high school educational programs.

He will continue to work with the students on a one-to-one basis in providing them counseling relative to establishing interviews, and the behavior they should exhibit during the interviews. He will assist in making arrangement for transportation for those who need it.

10. Utilizing unobtrusive instruments-informally constructed questionnaire, recorder, or not taking-the coordinator will obtain from prospective employeers (management, and personnel), and post-high school educational institutions (directors and admission personnel), information and data that will indicate modifications that should be made in the academic and the non-academic curriculums provided the students of this school system.

The attainment of this objective will be based upon the validity and the utilitarian value of the information as will be evaluated by the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent of this school system, the principal of each of the four high schools, and the supervisor of secondary education on the basis of the responses that each will make in responding to a questionnaire. (This questionnaire will be developed by the evaluator and submitted to these personnel during the month of May, 1975.)

Activities. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved relative to the attainment of this objective:

The coordinator will gather this information while talking to the representatives of job markets, and those of post-high school educational institutions. His purpose for obtaining this information will be to provide the personnel of the school system this information so the personnel can make modifications in the educational program being offered.

This will not result in a burden for the coordinator since the people with whom he communicates will provide him this information, anyway, in most instances.

11. During the faculty inservice training sessions that will be conducted within each of the four high schools each month of the school year, the placement counselor will help the sugject-matter teachers and the other school personnel develop specific plans to communicate to the students the ways in which the curriculum offerings are directly related to:

    a. The occupations listed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

    b. The occupations that exist locally.

    c. Local and distantly located educational institutions in which the students may enroll.

    The degree to which this objective is attained will be based upon the results of an appropriate questionnaire that will be administered, during the month of May, 1975, to a representative sampling of faculty members in each of the four high schools. This questionnaire will be constructed by the evaluator and the coordinator. The contents of it will be approved by the advisory committee in each of the four high schools before it is administered to the faculty members.

    Activites. Following is a description of the activities in which the coordinator will be involved in attaining this objective:

    During the faculty meetings that will be conducted in each of the four high schools, the coordinator will provide the teachers with pertinent information and resources - job descriptions of jobs that exist locally and nationally - and discuss with them how to relate their subject-matter to these occupational areas.

    He will be responsible for explaining to the personnel how to use the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and how to use it in relating the subjects they teach to it.

    He will provide the personnel copies and excerpts of current, relevant literature such as, "Career Education Curriculum Development Using the Cluster Concept" by Patrick Weagraff, Director, Vocational-Technical Education Curriculum Laboratory, Department of Education, Sacramento, California; Guidance Monograph Series IV: Career Information and Development, Houghton Mifflin Company; "Theories of Occupational Choice," by E.G. Williamson and other nationally recognized researchers that will include: B. R. Forer; D. E. Super; E. Ginzburg; and J. H. Holland.

    The ultimate purpose for initiating staff development in this particular area is to motivate all teachers at each level, beginning with the kindergarten teachers, to become aware of the relationships that that exist between the subject matter they teach and occupations; and to become aware of the need to explain to the students this relationship. The implementation of this concept will result in a greater number of students comprehending the objectives of the subject-matter and thus providing them with credible reasons why they should remain in school.

III. Project Personnel

One person was employed under the auspices of the project to function on a full-time basis as coordinator of the project for 10 months beginning September 1, 1974, and ending June 30, 1975.

The director of the project was provided at no cost to the project.

IV. Procedures

The initial step taken in implementing the project was to visit each of the four participating high schools, and explain the project in its entirety to the Principal. Where possible the counselors were invited to attend these sessions. If this was not possible the counselors were visited separately for the purpose of explaining the project.

The next step was to decide which members of the business community were in a position to help place students, and who were willing to serve in this capacity. Once these personnel were identified they were contacted and requested to serve.

The administration of the selected test batteries was begun as soon as practical. Two batteries were administered in each of three high schools. These were the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) and Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB). The SVIB was administered in the fourth high school. Recruting personnel of the Armed Forces administered the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Blank (ASVAB) in this high school, in lieu of the GATB. Correlation between the GATB and the ASVAB was established with the help of the Armed Forces Testing Center, Lackland, AFB, Texas.

With sufficient amounts of data collected, the coordinator set about to place all exiting students in occupations or in post-secondary school occupational training programs.

V. Accomplishments

The accomplishments of the program included the following:

1. The evaluative and the assessment instruments were administered to all of the exiting students.

2. Each student was given an opportunity to hear an explanation of the results that he or she obtained subsequent to having had administered to them certain evaluative and assessment instruments.

3. Each student was provided an opportunity to discuss the results of the evaluative or assessment instruments he or she had written with the coordinator, or a guidance counselor.

4. Each student stated on paper for the coordinator of the project the occupations or post-secondary school training program into which he or she preferred to enter.

5. More than 50 percent of the students were placed in an occupation or into a post-secondary school occupational training program.

VI. Problems Encountered

The major problem encountered was the timing of the starting of the project. The seniors of 1975 should have been exposed to the project's ramifications in the last half of their junior year. Then interests and aptitudes could have been discussed, and possibly melded at a slower pace.

Of almost equal importance as a problem were the drop-outs. The SDE school leaver form does not have an area for the student's address on it. Secondly, the leaver report is approximately three weeks late when it is filled out and transmitted.

It is recommended that this problem be solved by allowing teachers to declare a student a drop-out to speed up the process of locating these students.

VII. The Future*

The future implementation of a project such as this one should concentrate upon:

1. Selecting a population of students who are occupationally oriented in relation to both short and long-range goals.

2. Selecting a number of students, no more than 250, with which to place in an occupation or post-secondary school training program.

3. Administer a minimum number of assessment-interest instruments. (The Strong Vocational Interest Blank is recommended as the only one to be administered during the students' senior year.)

4. Involve the parents, relatives, and friends of the students in the placement process to maximal degrees.

5. Involve the school personnel in the placement process.

6. Allow the coordinator more time during which to locate prospective employers.

7. Allow the coordinator more time during which to go into the community and communicate to the prospective employers the number of salable skills and competencies possessed by the exiting students.

* The contents of this section is based upon results of the questionnaires and the final evaluation of the project contained in Appendix A.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was submitted to a representative sampling of exiting students.

1. Did the conference, or conferences, you attended after being administered the ASVAB, the SVIB, the GATB, . . . or other instruments, help in understanding yourself? Yes 65% No 35%

2. If answer to (1) is no, explain. SVIB: students thought the instrument was more predictive and would pinpoint areas of employment.

GATB: the time was too short to accomplish manipulative and mental requirements of the battery.

3. Was your decision to seek either employment, in the area of your choice or enter a post high school educational program affected by the conference(s) you attended as a result of being administerd the above instruments? Yes 15% No 85%

4. If answer to (3) is no, please explain Family background; parental desires; lack of comprehension for the stated purposes of the program.

5. Were you aware of the Exiting Student Program prior to its inception? Yes _____ No 100%

6. How were you informed? Informed by the principal, guidance counselor, program coordinator, and classroom teachers.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7. What benefits do you feel your school, or business, can receive from this program?

School: combine exiting student program with guidance program and commence at 10th grade level. Give GATB and SVIB in the 9th grade.

Benefits: students will be better prepared to make a career choice as a result.

Business benefits: students would develop refined ideas concerning career choice.

8. Would you be willing to employ an Exiting Student prior to High School graduation? Yes _____ No 100%

9. If answer to 4 is "no", please state reason or reasons.

Lack of high school diploma or its equivalent is a life-long detrimental fact.

10. What function(s) were you asked to perform in this program?

Advisory X Functional _____ Other _____

11. Based on your experience as an employer, do you have a preference for male or female employees? If so, which? male

12. Has your institution received any benefits from participation in this program? Yes _____ No X Won't know until a follow-up study is conducted.

13. If yes, what kind? Educational _____

Economic _____

Other _____

SCHOOL

14. Do your students know how to:

a. Apply for a job? Yes X No _____

b. Apply for admission to a higher education institution?

Yes X No _____

15. If yes, are you aware of how they learned?

Coordinator Of Program X Parents X

Counselor X Other X

Other: learned about job through personnel directors.

16. Are you willing to participate in a similar program at a future date? Yes X NO _____

17. If "no", why?

_____

_____

_____

18. Number of students to whom the tests were administered the:

    a. Strong Vocational Interest Blanks 710

    b. the General Aptitude Test Battery 504

19. Number of students who stated on paper for the coordinator, their future plans by the end of April, 1975 376

20. Modifications that should be made in the curricular offerings.

    a. Students should learn how to fill out forms.

    b. Proper conduct for the interviewee in a formal interview situation should be stressed.

    c. More students should learn how to dress properly.

21. Staff development:

    The effects were highly positive in that external consultants visited in the classrooms and talked with the teachers in relation to specific curricular areas in order to relate these areas to the business world and to improve the students conception there of.

EVALUATION REPORT OF

EXITING STUDENTS

The conferences were held in small groups with the entire senior class, or at the times the individual students were in study hall. The students were asked to write what they felt they would prefer to do, i. e., work, go to a college of some type. These comments were then compared with the results of the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) and the results of the comparisons were made known to the student, or students concerned. An attempt was then made to explain any gap that existed.

The students felt that the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) was linked with the GATB, i. e., the aptitude indicated by the GATB were confirmed by the SVIB. The most difficult part of the conferences was the clearing up on this one point.

The majority of the students who had planned to enter an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) made these plans prior to their senior years. During the senior year the decision to be made concerned the college of choice rather than entering or not entering a college. This decision reflected a change of plans in the area of which discipline to follow.

Those exiting students who knew they would seek employment after leaving the school system knew this fact at the beginning of the year. There was no consistent pattern in this decision beyond the payment schedule on a car, or the

fact that no member of their immediate family had gone beyond high school.

The girls displayed an interest in college that was slightly less than that exhibited by the boys.

Those that were interested in employment had a multitude of stated reasons, generally for the funds to purchase specific items of apparel or adornment.

Women's Lib not withstanding, the appeal of marriage for girls had not been noticably diminished in the students seen and heard.

There was no prior knowledge exhibited of the exiting students program. In all probability this was due to the timing involved in funding the project and the employment of the project coordinator. Ideally this information should have been presented to the classes of 1975 when they were in the terminal portion of their junior year. The presentation should have been made en masse with the principals and the other internal advisory committee members present and identified. At this time the identification of the populations to be served could have been initiated, e. g., those that were college bound or vocational--, or employment--oriented. After this process was completed, definite plans for future contact could have been established.

Arrangements for earlier return of test results and appropriate interpretation programs should receive high priorty in ensuing projects, particularly for those students interested in vocational education. The internal advisory committee felt that the school could receive more benefit from a program of this type if the program commenced with the 10th grade students. At this time the selected and state-required battery tests could be

administered, and the students could begin formulating some type of elimination processes that would become refined during the remaining high school years. By the last semester of the senior year the possibility could exist that more positive plans had been formulated than those formulated without the benefits of this program.

The consensus of the external advisory committee (composed of a cross-section of the local businesses community) was that without a diploma or the equivalent, exiting students would definitely be handicapped. This committee was called upon minimally throughout the academic year, and then in an advisory capicity only. Those committee members who were in a position to hire people indicated that girls of high school age were not as desirable for employees as were boys. The types of tasks this age group would be hired to perform required more physical activities than purely mental activities. Additionally, males were not as prone to using this type of employment in the stepping stone syndrome as early as girls.

A follow-up study, or a continuation of the project, would be required before most participators, particularly at the school level, would have comments on the benefits received or to be received, from participating in this program. Approximately 80 % of the students that were contacted indicated a working knowledge of how to apply for a job. The counselors confirmed this percentage. Additionally, the inference was strong that the students themselves knew about the existence of jobs that some adults were not aware of, fully. These bits of knowledge apparently came from personnel directors, and others, who could have been or could not have been, in a position to know. The counselors at school, parents, and other students were also involved in this process.

Those personnel contacted who agreed to participate in a similar program another year did so without too many reservations. Since the business people had served primarily in an advisory capicity there were no pronounced reservations in their area. The school personnel however, stated a desirable change they would like to see introduced. This change is: a placement counselor for the specific purpose of helping students obtain employment was felt to be a desirable addition to the school staff. This would free existing counselors from vocational type duties, and allow them to provide more assistance to the students who are college bound, and allow assistance to be provided for in the area of the enrollment porcess.

The stress on vocational help would not be wasted, in all probability, if data obtained next year is similar to this year's data, i. e., 51% of the exiting seniors wanted to seek employment and 34% stated a preference for more schooling.

In sum, the exiting student program is sound in concept, and has not suffered from too many failures in reaching stated objectives. Some alterations in the design of the program seem to be indicated: start test administration earlier; identify more discrete segments of the student population; and concentrate efforts by all concerned with the program on these segments. This is particularly true for vocational emphasis.